

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A method of creating and applying ~~displaying~~ an annotation to
[[in]] an electronic document, comprising:

receiving in an electronic document application a request to create ~~display~~ an annotation
in an electronic document;

in response to the request to create the annotation, accessing a dynamic annotation
template, the dynamic annotation template being external to the electronic document application
and the electronic document, the dynamic annotation template having fixed content, associated
instructions defining variable content, and variable layout information for the fixed content and
the variable content;

~~executing the associated instructions to define the variable content;~~

creating an instance of the requested annotation using the variable layout information
included in the annotation template, the variable layout information defining the layout for the
fixed content and the variable content, the annotation instance being stored within the electronic
document; and

displaying the annotation instance in the electronic document, the annotation instance
having an appearance, including a variable layout, defined by the variable content, the fixed
content, and the variable layout information, ~~the annotation instance being modifiable by any
user having appropriate rights or permissions after the annotation instance is displayed in the
electronic document.~~

2. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, further comprising:

executing the associated instructions to define the variable content, wherein executing the
associated instructions includes:

determining a condition based on a state of a system hosting the electronic document

application, the electronic document application, or the electronic document; and
defining at least a part of the variable content based on the determined condition.

3. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 2 [[1]], wherein:
executing the associated instructions to define variable content includes generating one or more graphics.
4. (Canceled)
5. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 2 [[1]], wherein executing the associated instructions to define variable content includes:
requesting a service from a remote location;
receiving content information in response to the request; and
incorporating the content information into the variable content.
6. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 2 [[1]], wherein:
executing the associated instructions to define variable content includes receiving user input defining a value.
7. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein accessing the dynamic annotation template includes:
retrieving an electronic form.
8. (Original) The method of claim 7, wherein:
the electronic form includes one or more form fields having associated scripts.
9. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 2 [[1]], wherein:
executing the associated instructions to define variable content includes defining an appearance of one or more graphics~~vector art~~.

10. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, further comprising:
flattening the annotation content to create a static instance of the annotation; and
wherein displaying the instance in the electronic document creates a fixed representation
of the instance of the annotation.
11. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 2 ~~[[1]]~~, wherein:
executing the associated instructions to define variable content includes obtaining one or
more of a graphic, text, an image, audio, video, or a hyperlink.
12. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein:
displaying the instance of the requested annotation includes associating the annotation
instance with a specific location in the electronic document.
13. (Currently Amended) A computer program product on a computer readable storage
~~device medium~~ for creating and applying ~~displaying~~ an annotation to ~~[[in]]~~ an electronic
document, the computer program product comprising instructions operable to cause data
processing apparatus to perform operations comprising:
receiving in an electronic document application a request to create ~~display~~ an annotation
in an electronic document;
in response to the request to create the annotation, accessing a dynamic annotation
template, the dynamic annotation template being external to the electronic document application
and the electronic document, the dynamic annotation template having fixed content, associated
instructions defining variable content, and variable layout information for the fixed content and
the variable content;
~~executing the associated instructions to define the variable content;~~
creating an instance of the requested annotation using the variable layout information
included in the annotation template, the variable layout information defining the layout for the
fixed content and the variable content, the annotation instance being stored within the electronic
document; and
displaying the annotation instance in the electronic document, the annotation instance

having an appearance, including a variable layout, defined by the variable content, the fixed content, and the variable layout information, ~~the annotation instance being modifiable by any user having appropriate rights or permissions after the annotation instance is displayed in the electronic document.~~

14. (Currently Amended) The computer program product of claim 13, further comprising:
executing the associated instructions to define the variable content, wherein executing the associated instructions to define the variable content includes~~further comprises~~:

determining a condition based on a state of a system hosting the electronic document application, the electronic document application, or the electronic document; and

defining at least a part of the variable content based on the determined condition.

15. (Currently Amended) The computer program product of claim 14 ~~[[13]]~~, wherein executing the associated instructions to define the variable content further comprises generating one or more graphics.

16. (Canceled)

17. (Currently Amended) The computer program product of claim 14 ~~[[13]]~~, wherein executing the associated instructions to define the variable content further comprises:

requesting a service from a remote location;

receiving content information in response to the request; and

incorporating the content information into the variable content.

18. (Currently Amended) The computer program product of claim 14 ~~[[13]]~~, wherein executing the associated instructions to define the variable content further comprises receiving user input defining a value.

19. (Previously Presented) The computer program product of claim 13, wherein accessing the dynamic annotation template further comprises retrieving an electronic form.

20. (Original) The computer program product of claim 19, wherein:
the electronic form includes one or more form fields having associated scripts.
21. (Currently Amended) The computer program product of claim 14 [[13]], wherein
executing the associated instructions to define the variable content further comprises defining an
appearance of one or more graphics~~vector art~~.
22. (Previously Presented) The computer program product of claim 13, further comprising
instructions to cause a computer system to:
flatten the annotation content to create a static instance of the annotation; and
wherein the instructions to display the instance in the electronic document create a fixed
representation of the instance of the annotation.
23. (Currently Amended) The computer program product of claim 14 [[13]], wherein
executing the associated instructions to define the variable content further comprises:
obtaining one or more of a graphic, text, an image, audio, video, or a hyperlink.
24. (Previously Presented) The computer program product of claim 13, wherein the
instructions to display the instance include instructions to cause a computer system to:
associate the annotation instance with a specific location in the electronic document.
- 25-26. (Canceled)
27. (Currently Amended) A method of creating and applying~~displaying~~ an annotation to
[[in]] an electronic document, comprising:
accessing a dynamic annotation template, wherein the dynamic annotation template
includes variable layout information used to define a layout of a corresponding annotation
instance;
creating a plurality of~~one or more~~ annotation instances using the variable layout
information included in the dynamic annotation template, the plurality of~~one or more~~ annotation
instances being stored within the electronic document;

displaying a first annotation instance in a first portion of an electronic document in accordance with the dynamic annotation template; and

displaying a second annotation instance in a second portion of the electronic document in accordance with the dynamic annotation template, wherein the layout of the second annotation instance differs from the layout of the first annotation instance, and wherein the first annotation instance and the second annotation instance are each one of the plurality of annotation instances being stored within the electronic document.

28. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 27, wherein:

the first annotation instance and the second annotation instance each include a text object and a graphic object; and

an arrangement of the text object relative to the graphic object differs between the first annotation instance and the second annotation instance.

29. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 28, wherein:

at least one of the text object and the graphic object comprise variable content.

30. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 28, wherein:

the graphic object comprises one of a bitmap, vector art, or raster art.

31. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 27, wherein:

the dynamic annotation template comprises one or more form fields having executable instructions to define variable content.

32. (Currently Amended) A system comprising:

a device hosting an electronic document application; and

processor electronics configured to perform operations comprising:

receiving in the electronic document application a request to create display an annotation in an electronic document;

in response to the request to create the annotation, accessing a dynamic annotation template, the dynamic annotation template being external to the electronic document application and the electronic document, the dynamic annotation template having fixed content, associated instructions defining variable content, and variable layout information for the fixed content and the variable content;

~~executing the associated instructions to define the variable content;~~

creating an instance of the requested annotation using the variable layout information included in the annotation template, the variable layout information defining the layout for the fixed content and the variable content, the annotation instance being stored within the electronic document; and

displaying the annotation instance in the electronic document, the annotation instance having an appearance₁ including a variable layout₁ defined by the variable content, the fixed content, and the variable layout information, ~~the annotation instance being modifiable by any user having appropriate rights or permissions after the annotation instance is displayed in the electronic document.~~

33. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 32, further comprising:

executing the associated instructions to define the variable content, wherein the processor electronics are ~~further~~ configured to perform operations including comprising:

determining a condition based on a state of the device hosting the electronic document application, the electronic document application, or the electronic document; and

defining at least a part of the variable content based on the determined condition.

34. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 33 ~~[[32]]~~, wherein the processor electronics are further configured to perform operations comprising executing the associated instructions to generate one or more graphics.

35. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 33 ~~[[32]]~~, wherein the processor electronics are further configured to perform operations comprising:

requesting a service from a remote location;
receiving content information in response to the request; and
incorporating the content information into the variable content.

36. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 33 [[32]], further comprising an interface to receive user input, wherein the processor electronics are further configured to perform operations comprising executing the associated instructions to receive user input defining a value.

37. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 32, wherein accessing the dynamic annotation template includes retrieving an electronic form.

38. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 37, wherein the electronic form includes one or more form fields having associated scripts.

39. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 33 [[32]], wherein the processor electronics are further configured to perform operations comprising executing the associated instructions to define an appearance of one or more graphics~~vector art~~.

40. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 32, wherein the processor electronics are further configured to perform operations comprising:

flattening the annotation content to create a static instance of the annotation, wherein displaying the static instance ~~in the electronic document~~ creates a fixed representation of the static instance of the annotation.

41. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 33 [[32]], wherein the processor electronics are further configured to perform operations comprising executing the associated instructions to obtain one or more of a graphic, text, an image, audio, video, or a hyperlink.

42. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 32, wherein the processor electronics are further configured to perform operations comprising associating the annotation instance with a specific location in the electronic document.

43. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 32, wherein the associated instructions include instructions to retrieve a serial number from a centralized database, the centralized database being accessible to multiple users.
44. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 32, wherein the request to create the display ~~an annotation to an electronic document~~ is generated automatically in response to an event.
45. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the associated instructions include instructions to retrieve a serial number from a centralized database, the centralized database being accessible to multiple users.
46. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the request to create the display ~~an annotation to an electronic document~~ is generated automatically in response to an event.
47. (Currently Amended) The computer program product of claim 13, wherein the associated instructions include instructions to retrieve a serial number from a centralized database, the centralized database being accessible to multiple users.
48. (Currently Amended) The computer program product of claim 13, wherein the request to create the display ~~an annotation to an electronic document~~ is generated automatically in response to an event.
49. (New) The method of claim 1, wherein after the annotation instance is displayed in the electronic document, the annotation instance is modifiable by any user having appropriate rights or permissions.
50. (New) The computer program product of claim 13, wherein after the annotation instance is displayed in the electronic document, the annotation instance is modifiable by any user having appropriate rights or permissions.

51. (New) The system of claim 32, wherein after the annotation instance is displayed in the electronic document, the annotation instance is modifiable by any user having appropriate rights or permissions.